DragonSat DS-5500HD

- *Funcționează prin intermediul EPG în două moduri*
- *Comutare de mare viteză intre canale*
- *Reacție rapidă la toate comenzile de control de la distanță*
- *Tuner potrivit pentru semnale slabe*
- *Player integrat și server pentru conținut multimedia*

A Satellite Receiver with Many Excellent Features

Just because it's a high quality receiver doesn't mean it has to be big. Dragonsat wants to prove this with their new DS-5500HD. So, is it true? Well, that's what we wanted to find out so we put this new receiver to the test.

After unpacking the box, there was really nothing that stood out visually. At 22 x 14.5 x 3.5 cm the DS-5500HD is nice and small. It should therefore easily find its place in any TV cabinet or living room wall unit. On the front panel the manufacturer incorporated a four-digit display and right next to it a status LED as well as three buttons for receiver operation without the remote control. If you turn the Dragonsat receiver around, you'll reveal the tightly spaced connector panel. In addition to the required connections, the manufacturer also included the CI slot and the internal card reader on the back of the box. The satellite signal is fed into the Sat IF input. Right alongside the input is the looped-through output as well as an HDMI port, a USB port, an RJ-45 network interface, an S/PDIF output, an RS232 interface and a connection for the included CVBS/Stereo audio adapter cable. Power is supplied to the DS-5500HD by an external 12V power supply. This allowed the manufacturer to eliminate the extra space in the receiver that would have otherwise been needed for an internal power supply.

The included remote control is somewhat narrow and the buttons on the lower portion are rather small. Overall though, the quality of the receiver and remote control left us with a very positive impression as did the included user manual.

As has become standard with nearly every receiver, the owner of a DS-5500HD will also be greeted with an Installation Assistant when first turning on the box. It will guide you through the most important basic settings. This includes OSD language, time settings, network settings and of course an automatic channel scan to top it off.

If one or more details are missing or if you simply want to get an overview of all the functions of your newly acquired receiver, we suggest you take a look in the Main menu. In the System settings you can personalize nearly every one of the DS-5500HD's functions. For example, the resolution of the video signal output can be set to 480i, 480p, 576i, 576p, 720p, 1080i or 1080p or you can let the receiver handle this task automatically. We really appreciate the fact that more and more receivers, including the DS-5500HD, are fully HD compatible even though the availability of 1080p HD content depending on the region is still very limited or completely non-existent. But at least you're ready for the future.

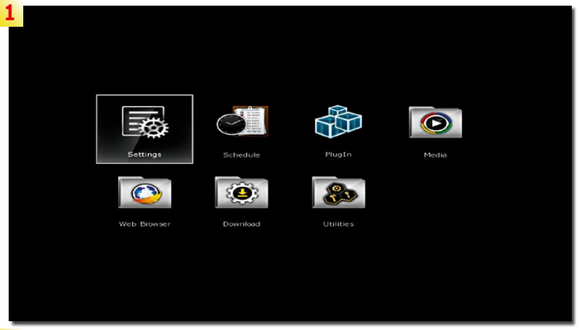
External USB storage devices connected to the receiver via the USB interface

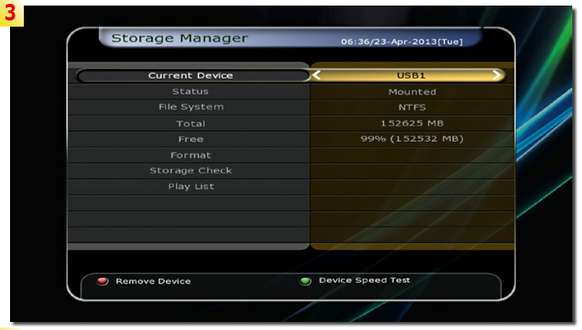
VIP Card
Tested & Recommended Product by
TELE-audiovision International
The World's Largest Digital TV Trade Magazine

TELE audiovision AWARD 09-10/2013

Dragonsat DS-5500HD
Very fast satellite receiver with fully integrated Internet access

www.TELE-audiovision.com/13/09/dragonsat





can be used without any problems. Formatting these devices (thankfully also in NTFS format) with this receiver is also possible. If you really want to be able to use all of the DS-5500HD's functions, such as the various OSD display modes or its PVR features like fast forward/rewind, it definitely pays to have a look in the user manual where detailed information on these and other features can be found. All-in-all, the DS-5500HD's menu structure is very logically constructed and easy to use although one of the options to save energy in Standby that the manufacturer incorporated in the display settings gave us a little bit of a headache in our test center.

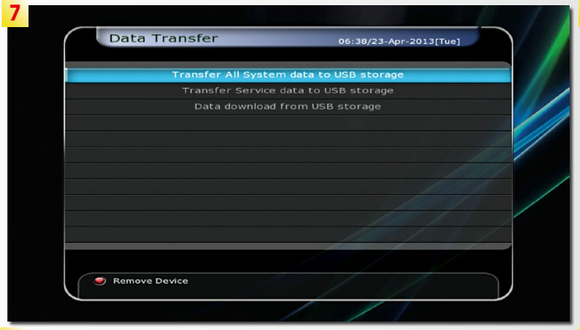
To make it easy for the new owner to get right to satellite reception, Dragonsat included a very comprehensive list of European and Asian satellites along with the corresponding C and Ku-band transponder data. In some cases this list is very up to date; the newly launched ASTRA 1N satellite located at 28.2° east is correctly identified. But in other instances it's not quite up to date; important transponders like 11494H or 11671H on ASTRA1 at 19.2° east are missing.

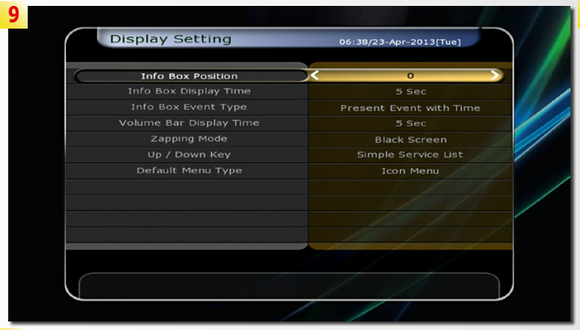
The DS-5500HD is compatible with all the DiSEqC protocols allowing it to be used with nearly every possible antenna configuration. DiSEqC 1.0 can be used with up to four satellites, 1.1 with up to 16 satellites as well as 1.2 and 1.3 for motorized antennas. They also thought to include the ability to freely define LOF parameters.

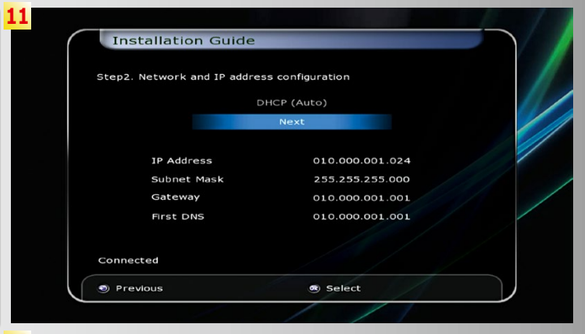
Once these settings have been taken care of and the receiver has been matched to the reception equipment, the next step would be to start filling the channel list with as many as 10,000 entries. To handle this task there is an automatic channel scan on one or more satellites, a manual transponder scan, an expanded transponder scan with manual PID entry as well as a Blindscan. If you're not interested in receiving encrypted channels, the scan can be set to find only freely receivable channels. This would save quite a bit of time and provide organization later on when going through the channel list.

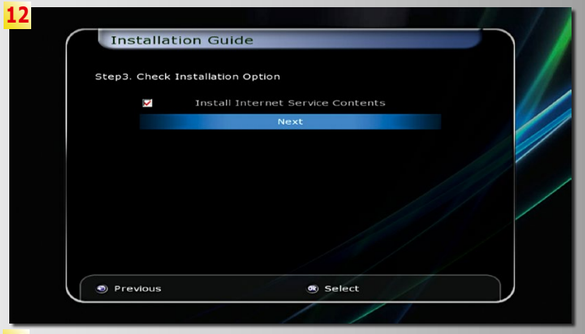
The channel scan itself was fast right from the start; the DS-5500HD needed only about five minutes to find 1568 TV and 373 radio channels on HOTBIRD at 13° east. If you invest a little more time, 12 minutes to be exact, the Blindscan function will find 1604 TV and 374 radio channels on the same satellites. Naturally the Blindscan feature had to prove itself under more difficult conditions, specifically on TURKSAT at 42° east with all of its narrowband SCPC transponders. It mastered

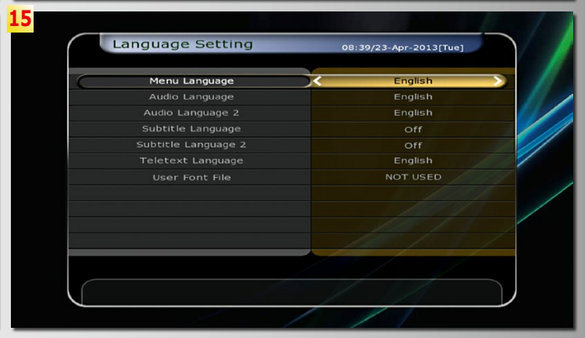
1. The DS-5500HD's main menu
2. System settings
3. The DS-5500HD also supports the NTFS file system. Recorded data no longer needs to be split into 4GB pieces
4. Channel list editor
5. Channel list entries can be edited all the way to their PID values
6. Thanks to the Favorites lists, popular channels can be accessed very quickly at any time
7. The customized channel list can be backed up on an external USB storage device
8. Recorder settings
9. OSD settings
10. The installation assistant starts with the OSD language selection
11. Network settings
12. If you prefer, you can do without all of the DS-5500HD's many Internet features, but who would want to do that?
13. Time settings
14. Daylight savings time settings have been uniquely solved
15. Language settings



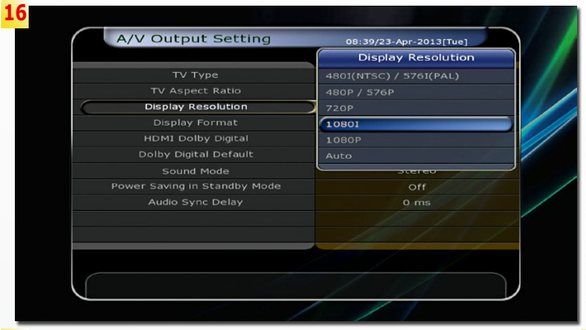








16



16. The receiver supports all of the standard video output resolutions

17. The preprogrammed satellite list is extensive and up-to-date

18. The recently launched ASTRA1N at 28.2° east is correctly listed

19. The transponder list is not always up-to-date; missing, for example, are a few important transponders on ASTRA1 at 19.2° east that have a number of HD channels

20. The DiSEqC 1.0 and DiSEqC 1.1 protocols are supported

21. The DS-5500HD effortlessly drives a motorized antenna with the help of the DiSEqC 1.2 and 1.3 protocols

22. Four different scan modes are available

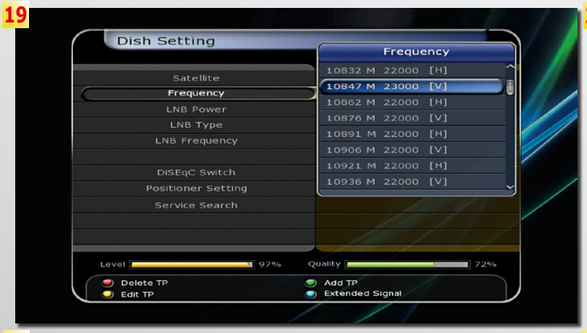
23. The scan can be limited to just TV channels or unencrypted channels

24. The LOF parameters can be individually matched

17

18

19



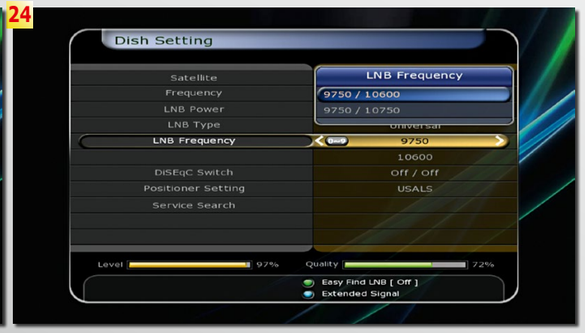
20

21

22

23

24

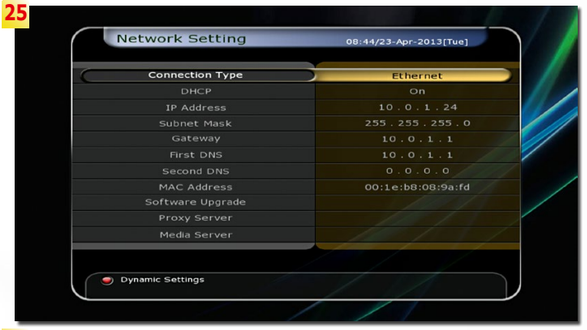


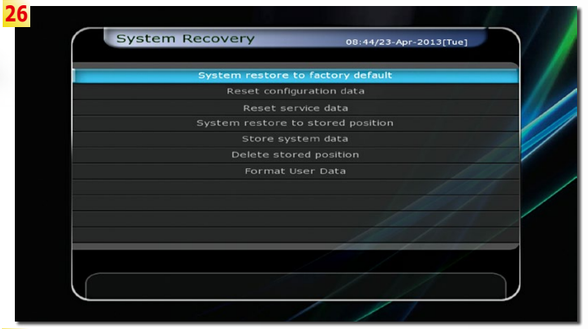
this task without any problems. This is exactly how a Blindscan should work!

With nearly 2000 different channels that alone were found on a single satellite, powerful editing and sorting capabilities of the channel list are an absolute must. And the DS-5500HD did not disappoint here; the channel list entries can be easily deleted, moved, renamed, locked with a PIN code to hide them from the curious eyes of your kids or shifted into one of the many Favorites lists. The channel list can also be sorted alphabetically, by provider, satellite, transponder or encryption system and it can all be handled with the push of one button.

When you look at the Main menu for the first time it quickly becomes clear that the DS-5500HD is strongly oriented to the reception of content via the Internet. It makes sense then that the manufacturer paid special attention when designing its networking features. The fact that the DHCP protocol is supported comes as no surprise but we also appreciated that the receiver can also be connected to the Internet wirelessly through the optionally available WiFi or 3G dongle. This makes the DS-5500HD perfect for outdoor use out on the balcony or at a camping site.

After the channel list is filled and the settings have been adjusted to your personal tastes, the receiver automatically switches to the first available channel when exiting the Main menu. And it's at this point where the very attractively designed Info bar can be seen for the first time. In addition to the title of the current program and, if desired, the upcoming program, the Info bar also contains a number of symbols. These symbols provide information on what features are available with the current program, specifically, teletext, language choices, subtitles or HD resolution. And it's here where the dedicated function but-

25


26


27

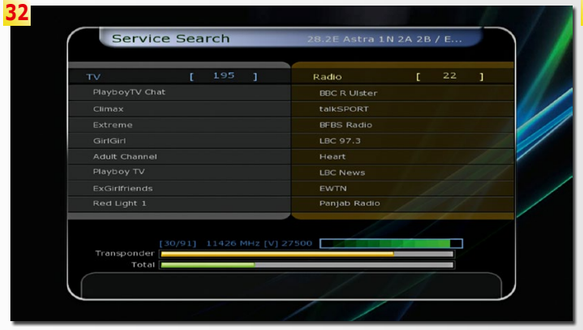

28


29


25. Network settings
26. If necessary, many of the settings can be reset to their factory default values
27. Utilities menu
28. Individual PID entry in the expanded scan
29. Blindscan function
30. A successful Blindscan of HOTBIRD at 13°; thus far 37 new channels have been found
31. SCPC reception as seen here in the picture via TURKSAT at 42° east is also possible
32. Channel scan for ASTRA2 at 28.2° east
33. Setting up a timer entry
34. Additional transmission information
35. EPG overview for six channels
36. EPG overview of one channel
37. Subtitle selection
38. The satellite list can be directly accessed through a dedicated function button on the remote control
39. Picture-in-picture, mode 1

30

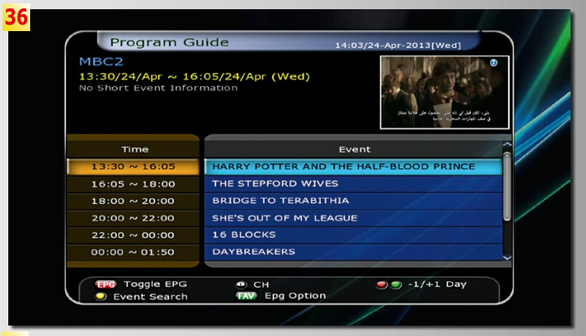

31


32


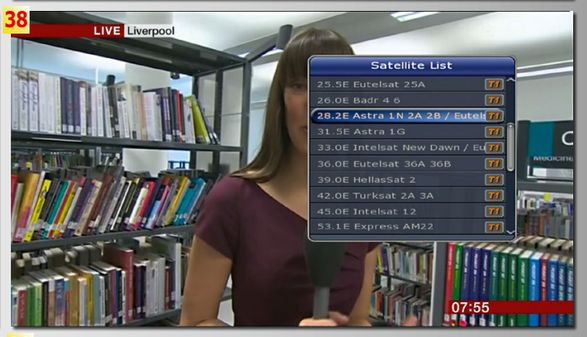
33


34


35

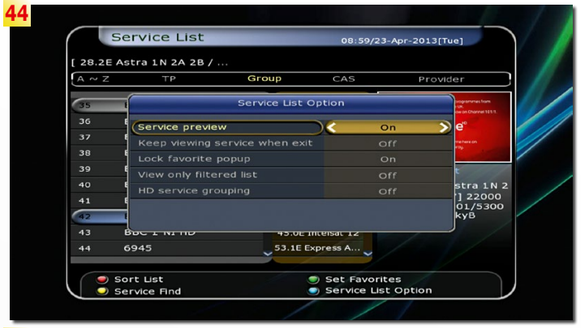

36


37


38


39


40. Picture-in-picture, mode 2
41. Picture-in-picture channel selection
42. Mosaic view of up to 12 channels
43. The channel list sorted by satellite
44. Channel list options
45. The Download menu. Here the user can update software, Apps and preprogrammed lists on the receiver via the Internet
46. The Plugin menu provides access to a variety of tools
47. Weather forecast
48. The Media submenu

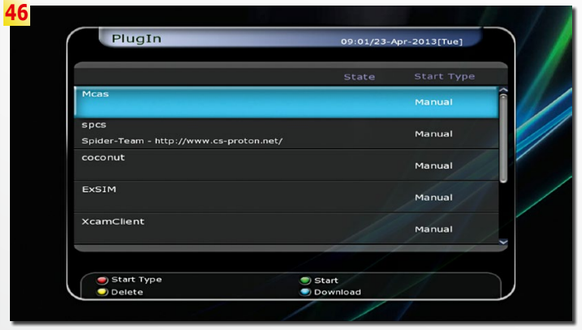


40

45

41

46

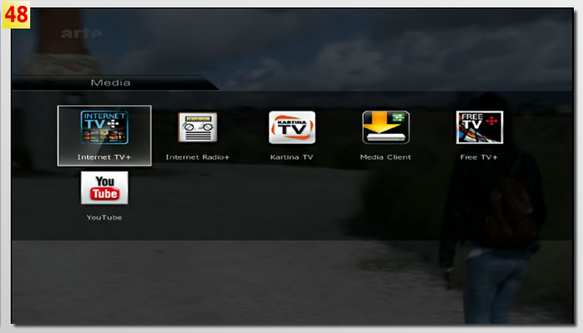


42

47

43

48



tons on the remote control show their worth: they provide access to teletext, language selection, subtitles or the Favorites lists.

The new Dragonsat receiver's channel list can be accessed, as is typical, with the OK button and presents itself as very detailed and organized. Thanks to the speedy channel switching times of less than one second, channel surfing with the DS-5500HD is actually fun. The Electronic Program Guide (EPG) will also raise an eyebrow: it is available in two different modes and provides detailed programming information for several hours for up to six channels or it can show the entire programming schedule for a single channel for the next several days. Since the new Dragonsat also comes with PVR features, recordings can easily be programmed directly via the EPG.

We definitely like that you not only can record two channels at the same time while watching a third channel live, but the Timeshift function is also automatically available at any time (up to a maximum of one simultaneous recording). If you're afraid of missing the next episode of your favorite TV series, then the ability to set up daily, weekly, weekday or weekend timer recordings would be just perfect for you.

Overall, playing around with the DS-5500HD was a lot of fun and this was due in large part to the speedy reaction of the receiver to remote control commands. The decision by the manufacturer to incorporate an STi processor with 256MB Flash as well as 256 MB SDRAM was right on the money.

Dragonsat even paid close attention to quality when the tuner was chosen; in our tests it was able to handle weaker signals like those found on BADR at 26° east and also narrowband signals such as those found on TURKSAT at 42° east. We also want to mention the practical Picture-in-Picture (PIP) function that shines during commercial breaks. It can be used to show a second TV channel is a small window on top of the primary channel or display two channels side-by-side in the same size windows. Also available, although not all too useful, is the ability with the push of one button on the remote control to provide a mosaic

49. New entries can be added manually to the Internet TV+ list

50. Internet TV+ playback

51. Unfortunately, the Internet Radio+ list is empty and doesn't contain any preprogrammed channels

52. The YouTube App in the FreeTV+ section worked perfectly

53. The web browser with a number of bookmarks to interesting pages

54. The character entry via the OSD keyboard works just like a mobile telephone

55. The TELE-audiovision homepage with the browser's status bar at the bottom of the display

56. Bookmark function

57. The web browser window can be adjusted in size and moved to different positions

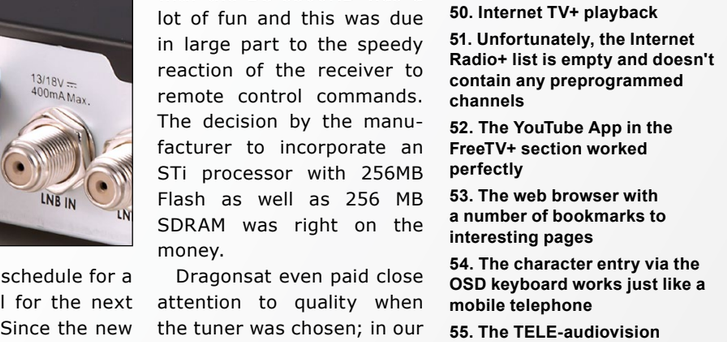
58. Two recordings (even from HD channels) can take place at the same time

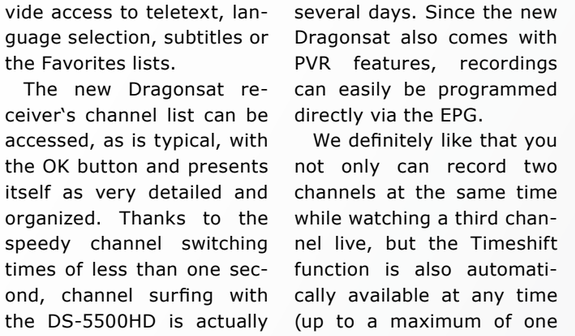
59. The receiver displays all of the previously recorded content clearly and concisely

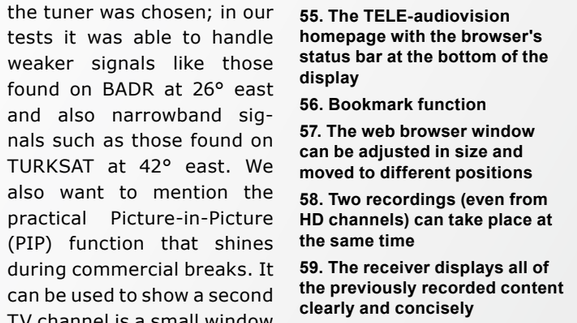
60. The DLNA media player can access the multimedia content on other devices in the local network

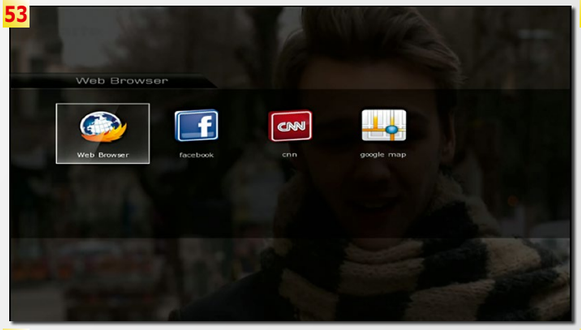
61. Here you can see a number of video files that are stored on a MAC and are displayed and played back on the DS-5500HD

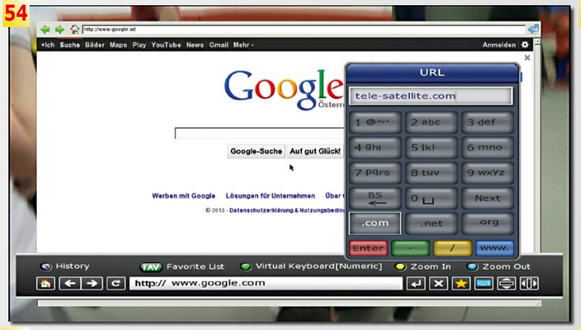
62. Music playback via DLNA in the local network

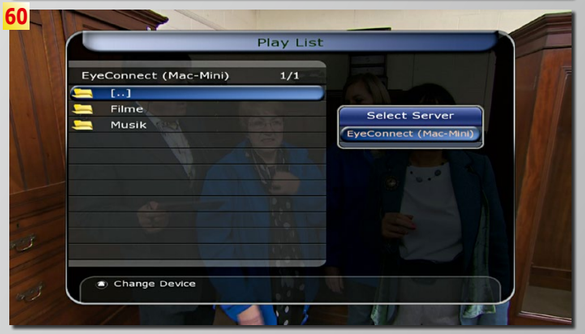


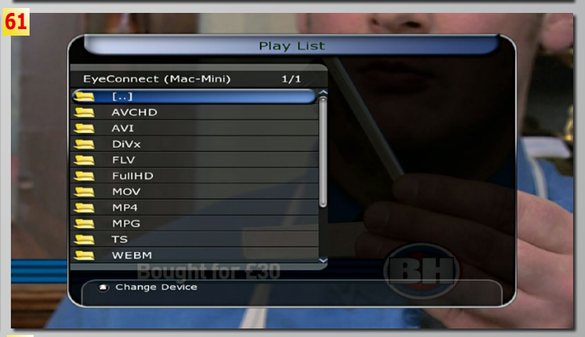


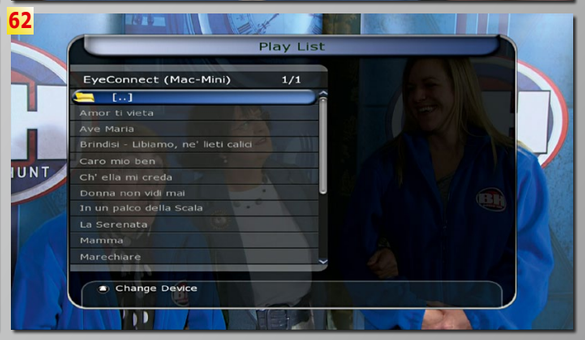


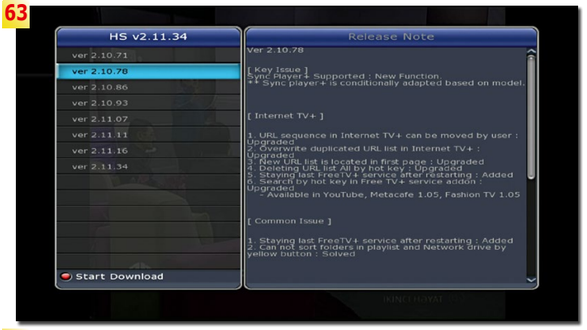


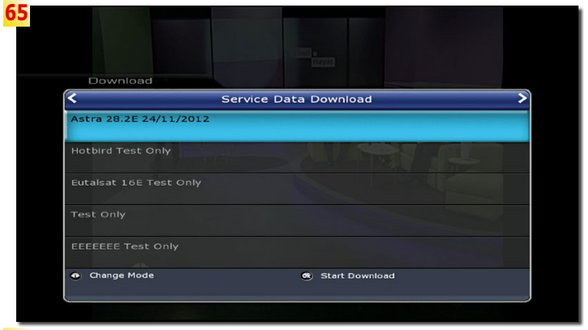


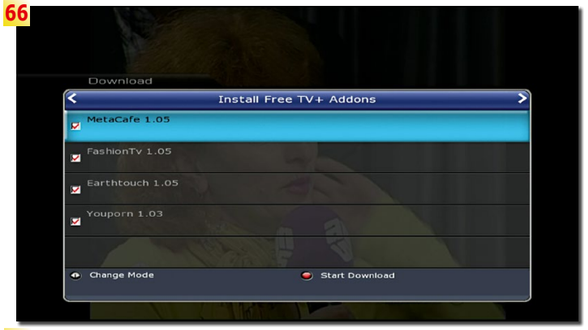


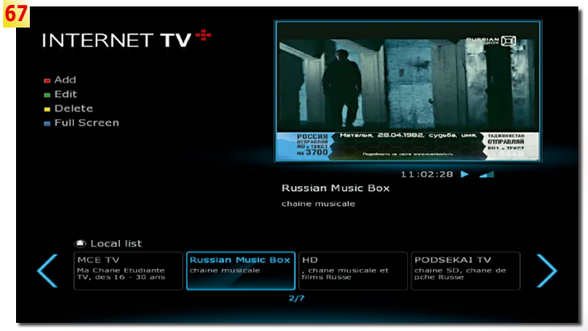












63. Thanks to automatic software updates, it's very easy to keep the Dragonsat up-to-date

64. In addition to new software, FreeTV+ Apps, Internet TV+ and Internet Radio+ lists can be downloaded via the Internet. Even preconfigured channel lists (e.g. for ASTRA2 at 28.2° east) are also available for download

65. Channel list download for ASTRA2 at 28.2° east, HOTBIRD at 13° east and EUTELSAT at 16° east

66. FreeTV+ Apps can be downloaded and updated from the Internet

67. The picture quality of the preprogrammed Internet TV+ channels is very good

display of 9 or 12 channels.

If you take a look at the manufacturer's website, you'll quickly realize that they are constantly at work modifying and improving the DS-5500HD. There have already been multiple updated software versions posted there. New software can not only be downloaded from the Dragonsat website, but updates can also be performed directly on the receiver through an Internet update.

Dragonsat with their new DS-5500HD is standing squarely behind the Internet as a secondary source of TV and radio reception. We here at TELE-audiovision feel that the manufacturer is definitely on the right path; high-speed Internet access has already established itself to be a viable competitor to satellite, cable and terrestrial TV.

If you enter the submenu „Media", you'll come across catchy feature names like Internet TV+, Internet Radio+ or FreeTV+. When these were accessed during our tests we uncovered a small disappointment: a mere seven TV channels were preprogrammed and the Internet Radio+ list was completely empty. On top of that, of the seven preprogrammed channels, only three could be accessed and displayed. If you're not satisfied with these choices, the alternative is to manually add Internet channels. Fortunately, this can be done without any problems.

The heading FreeTV+ provides access to a variety of multimedia and content providers via the Internet with the help of some practical Apps. Currently there's only one App for YouTube available; additional Apps were displayed as if they were available for download but in the end they could not be loaded on our test receiver. Nevertheless, the YouTube App worked perfectly and when all the other Apps work reliably, the user should be more than satisfied.

To top it all off, the multimedia section has a client that provides access to the Russian PayTV provider Kartina TV and, of course, there's also the ability to play back local video files in the formats WMV, TS, MP4, MP4 HD, MKV, Flash, DivX and AVI. For audio files the MP3 format is available and for pictures it's the JPG format.

In connection with this we also liked the integrated DLNA media player with which you can reach across the network and access your music collection on your PC with the DS-5500HD. The same, of course, is also true for videos. And as if this wasn't enough, Dragonsat made it possible using the DLNA media player to access all of the stored content on your receiver, whether it's videos, music or pictures, from a Windows PC. This worked exceptionally well in both directions in our tests and at the same time it was a lot of fun.

Of course, such an Internet-oriented receiver like the DS-5500HD should not be without a browser. And Dragonsat did not fail here either, however, improvements can be made here as evidenced by the 10 second startup time that was needed. Even the display of websites despite a 100Mbit Internet connection was very slow here in our test center - nearly 20 seconds was needed to fully load our Facebook page. Yet we did like that Dragonsat included a number of preprogrammed bookmarks for some of the more popular sites like Facebook, CNN or Google Maps. Entering characters via the virtual keyboard also worked correctly. The browser itself can be individually adjusted for size and position such that, for example, a commercial break can be used to surf the Internet while still having the TV picture in view so you know when it would be time to stop surfing. The Internet features are rounded off with a weather App, an RSS reader, a calendar and a calculator.

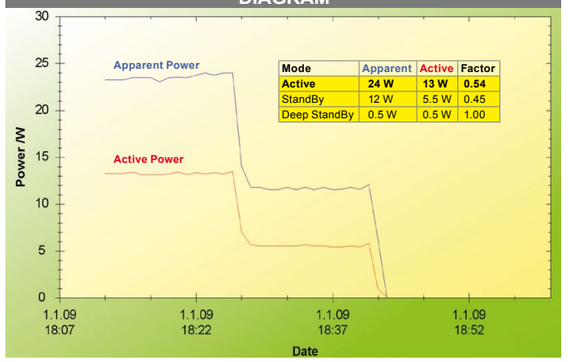
At this point we only want to mention the submenu Plugin for completeness; it contains numerous tools that go deeper into the reception technology.

EXPERT OPINION

+ Handy and easy to use receiver highlighted by a nicely structured OSD and sophisticated software. Thanks to a wide variety of Internet features, this box is much more than an ordinary satellite receiver. Through its space-saving design and its external 12V power supply it would be perfect for mobile applications, such as, when camping.

– The loading of Apps did not work during our tests and the Internet TV+ and Internet Radio+ lists are very lackluster and need some updating.

ENERGY DIAGRAM



Energy: The first 15 minutes active operation, the second 15 minutes normal standby, the third 15 minutes expanded standby with energy saving functions